



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS  
Washington, D.C. 20231  
[www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/691,864	10/19/2000	Ronald James Scherer	3616.177USII	5410

23552 7590 03/25/2002

MERCHANT & GOULD PC  
P.O. BOX 2903  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402-0903

EXAMINER
----------

MORGAN, EILEEN P

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3723

DATE MAILED: 03/25/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No. 09/691,864	Applicant(s) Scherer et al.
Examiner Morgan	Art Unit 3723

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1)  Responsive to communication(s) filed on Oct 19, 2000
- 2a)  This action is FINAL.      2b)  This action is non-final.
- 3)  Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4)  Claim(s) 1-61 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5)  Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6)  Claim(s) 1-61 is/are rejected.
- 7)  Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8)  Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9)  The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10)  The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11)  The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a)  approved b)  disapproved.
- 12)  The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13)  Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

a)  All b)  Some\* c)  None of:

1.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3.  Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

- 14)  Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

### Attachment(s)

- 15)  Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)      18)  Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 16)  Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)      19)  Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 17)  Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). 3      20)  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Art Unit: 3723

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 17,18,61 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The terms "each side" lack proper antecedence. Claim 61 is unclear. What does resulting "therefrom" refer to?

### ***Double Patenting***

3. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321© may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Art Unit: 3723

4. Claims 1-61 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-55 of U.S. Patent No. 6,321,740. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the patented claims merely recited intended use language that the projections travel into the workpiece contributing to an irregular formation.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

6. Claims 1-10,14-27,31-44,48-61 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fladgard et al. - 5,722,386.

Fladgard discloses the claimed invention of a block splitter and method having first and second assemblies (40a,40b) with first and second blades (50a, 50b) and a plurality of projections on both sides of said blades (42a,44a,42b,44b), the projections having various shapes (figures 7a-7e) wherein the projections extend more or less than the height of the blade (along the horizontal axis). Claims 58-60 do not further limit the blocks of the previous claims.

Application/Control Number: 09/691864

Art Unit: 3723

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 11-13,28-30,45-47 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Fladgard, alone.

Fladgard discloses that the projections are integral with assembly and does not disclose the projections being adjustable in height or threaded to assembly. However, to make an integral element into two separate pieces has been deemed to be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. To use a threaded element to connect two pieces is old and well-known in the connecting art and the degree of engaging the threads would vary the height of one element relative to the other and therefore would act as a height adjusting device.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to E. Morgan whose telephone number is (703) 308-1743.

EM

March 19, 2002



EILEEN P. MORGAN  
PRIMARY EXAMINER